



COOLAMON

SCHOOL OF EARLY LEARNING

FAMILY HANDBOOK

WELCOME!

Coolamon School of Early Learning welcomes you and your family.

The centre is designed to create an environment of trust, where your children can grow emotionally, intellectually, socially, and physically. We are proud of our ability to provide quality care and education for the children at our centre and look forward to a fulfilling and enjoyable association with your family.

Our goals as a service are;

- To promote a health and positive self-image in every child
- To develop in each child a healthy respect and attitude towards others, regardless of their race, culture, sex, and belief
- To encourage educator participation, suggestions, interactions, and ideas in all areas
- To provide happy and caring staff that work as a team.
- To provide a program that meets both individual and group needs and is based on the service's philosophy, goals, regular observations, and child / family / educator input.
- To develop positive social, emotional development through various experiences and activities which are tailored to meet both individual and group's needs.
- To provide a program that includes music, literature, cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, and all other domains of learning.
- To provide a calm, pleasant hygienic environment which is aesthetically pleasing to the children, parents, and educators.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We acknowledge the Wadjuk people of the Noongar nation as traditional owners of the land where Coolamon School of Early Learning stands. We would like to pay respect to the elder's past, present and emerging. We pay respect to the deep knowledge embedded within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their ownership of country.

At Coolamon School of Early Learning we have a dedicated approach to continuous improvement by embedding our service practices, using critical reflection and through meaningful engagement with families and the community.

We believe in continuously reflecting and enacting the guiding principles of the National Law, which are laid out within our statement of practice, daily practices and procedures.

Please see the complete service philosophy in the foyer of our service.

SERVICE INFORMATION

Our service is licensed for 133 children;

Discoverers 1 -4 Ratio (0-2yrs)

Explorers 1 – 4 Ratio (0-2yrs)

Adventurers 1 – 5 Ratio (2 – 3 yrs)

Inventors 1 -5 Ratio (2 – 3 yrs)

Creators 1- 10 Ratio (3 – 5yrs)

Investigators 1 – 10 Ratio (3 – 5yrs)

We are open from 6.30 am to 6.30 pm Monday to Friday for fifty-two weeks of the year excluding public holidays. Offering quality care for children aged 0 – 6 years old.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

Owner / Nominated Supervisor – Ann Marie;

- Responsible for the overall running of the service

Director / Nominated Supervisor - Sarah

- Responsible for admin and day to day running of the service.

Second in Charge (2iC) – Erin

- Assisting the service Director in admin and day to day running of the service

Educational Leader – Sanjina

- Implements and guides educators

Early Childhood Teacher-

- Implementing the school readiness program

Room Leaders – See staff photo wall.

- Implement the educational program of the room.

Qualified Educators – See staff photo wall.

- Our qualified educators have a diploma degree or ACECQA equivalent qualification in Early Childhood and support the implementation of the educational program.

Educator Assistants – See staff photo wall.

- Educators support the qualified educators in caring for the children and support the implementation of the educational program.

Trainee Educators – See staff photo wall.

- Educators training in the service studying towards a Certificate 3 or Diploma in Early Childhood.

Service Cook – Kristy-Mae

- Implements the service menu.

When permanent staff are absent, relief staff are employed to look after your children. We believe continuity of care is important for young children, therefore every endeavour is made to use a regular pool of relief staff so that the children are familiar with them.

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

The EYLF describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming. From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture, and place. Their earliest development and learning take place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most influential educators. As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests and construct their own identities and understandings of the world.

BELONGING

Experiencing belonging – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood, and a wider community. Belonging acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

BEING

Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world. Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.

BECOMING

Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills, and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

There are five outcomes within the EYLF that allow educators to use as a guide for planning and extending children's learning and development;

1. Children have a strong sense of identity.
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
4. Children are confident and involved learners.
5. Children are effective communicators.

LEARNING AND PROGRAMS

We follow the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) as per our programming policy. This is Australia's first national framework for early childhood educators.

We encourage children to be responsible for their own learning through choices in experiences, interests, routine. We use conversations, actions and play as the basis for teaching which involves the children being partners in teaching by seeking out ideas, opinions, thoughts, and questions. We encourage children in promoting their independence and self-help skills by assisting within the routine, doing things themselves first e.g., serving food, putting their shoes on etc. We believe children learn effectively through play and Educators who are diligent in their responsiveness to each child support this.

Our service uses Storypark as a platform for our educators to document and display children's learning and development. Here educators will observe children throughout their day and use these observations for forward planning. Educators take the information gathered and create an 'Educational Program' for individual children and groups.

If we as educators have any areas of concern, we will inform you and advise where help may be pursued, e.g., speech therapist. We understand this is a sensitive topic and it is always your decision to follow this up. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of learning and development with families.

As a part of your child's learning journey whilst at our service, we encourage all families to be involved in the service. We welcome all suggestions and input.

Below is a QR code that gives an in-depth explanation of the Storypark for families app.



ENROLMENT

Families are required to complete the enrolment form prior to us caring for your child. All sections of the enrolment form must be completed for the service to provide high quality care and education to your child. We ask parents to amend any details when necessary.

Prior to enrolment, we encourage all families to bring their child for orientation and 'play' days to become familiar with their new surroundings. It could take more than one visit for your child to settle into the service.

We understand it can be hard leaving your child, we have the facility for all families to ring and talk to the educators within your child's room to discuss how they are going.

At Coolamon School of Early Learning, we have an open-door policy where all families are welcome to visit at any time. We also encourage all families to give as much input into our service policies, procedures, practices, and educational program.

If any family member has any special talent, whether it be a musical talent, cooking talent or just enjoy reading stories, we would love for you to share them with us!

We have regular special days throughout the year, some include parent evenings, grandparent days and a special Christmas party at the end of the year.

It is vital that the service is notified of all Court Orders affecting the children within our service and a copy provided.

Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting a child.

FEES

Our daily rate is \$140 per day, before Child Care Subsidy (CCS) has been applied.

We offer half days for the first two weeks of your child's enrolment as a 'settling in period' at, this is \$90 per day before CCS.

Families are required to complete the online Child Care Subsidy assessment via [myGov](#) website prior to starting at the Service. This will determine your eligibility and level of Child Care Subsidy entitlement.

On enrolment we will need the CRN of the person linked with the child, as long with the child's CRN so we can confirm register attendance and ensure that you are receiving the appropriate subsidy.

To suit the needs of your CCS hourly entitlements, we offer session times. All session times have a one-hour grace period at either end. If you arrive before or after this grace period, you will be charged \$1 for 60 mins. Please speak to our coordinator to learn more about our sessions that will suit your family.

For CCS purposes, we offer sessional bookings. Please speak to the coordinator regarding these.

PAYMENT

We offer 2 payment methods at our service, deducted from your designated bank account or debit / credit card.

Fees are taken the week prior to enrolment, should CCS not process before this, full fees are to be paid until it is.

Fees at our service are to be paid at least 2 weeks in advance and a non-refundable enrolment fee of \$30 is required on booking. All accounts are charged weekly or under certain circumstances fortnightly when arranged with the Director. Full fees are charged for public holidays and sick days. If your child is absent without notification and your fees are outstanding, the centre reserves the right to allocate your child's placement to another child. When fees are paid to date, the enrolment will stand until that paid period ends. If your fees are not paid, this will result in your enrolment being ceased with the service.

A \$10 late charge will be added to your account if your account declines.

2 weeks written notice is required when ceasing care or decreasing days.

Due to CCS requirements we **do not** accept cash payments.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Child Care Subsidy is a means-tested subsidy paid directly to the Service as a fee reduction. There are 3 factors that will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy, which include:

1. Combined Family Income
2. Activity Test for both parents
3. Service Type

Transitioning to Child Care Subsidy requires families to provide information and confirm current details by using your Centrelink online account through [myGov](#). Here you will be asked to provide your combined family income estimate for the financial year, hours of recognised activity including work, training, study and volunteering and the type of childcare your family uses.

Should your CCS drop out or display incorrect % or hourly entitlements, the service cannot alter these, and you will need to contact Centrelink directly to rectify.

ALLOWABLE ABSENCES

Your childcare subsidy will be paid for absences for up to 42 days per child per financial year. The parent gap fee is still payable. Additional absences beyond 42 days for certain reasons may be approved and paid. Please talk to us about the additional absences.

Public holidays will be counted as an absence if the child would normally have attended the Service on that weekday, and fees have been charged for that day for the child.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

The Australian Government has priority of Access Guidelines for allocating placements when demands exceeds supply. The three levels of priority which our service follows when filling vacant places is as follows;

1. A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
2. A child of a single parent who satisfies the work / training / study test under section 14 of the A New Tax system (Family Assistance) Act 1999
3. Any other child

Priority shall be given to the following children;

- Children in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Families
- Children in families which include a disabled person.
- Children in families in a low income.
- Children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Children in socially isolated families.
- Children of single parents.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Our service has a license and insurance between the hours of 6.30AM and 6.30PM. This means children cannot be on the premises outside of these hours.

We ask that children are brought and collected from the service at the booked times. When changes occur, please contact the Director. This will enable us to make sure the staffing is within the correct ratios.

All children must be signed in and out every day of attendance. Please make sure you advise an educator of your arrival and departure every day.

Our service has a late fee policy as follows;

- A charge of \$1 per minute will be made for any child left after 6.30PM
- Should late pickups become reoccurring, after 3 late pickups families will be charged \$5 per minute until pick up.

The service will contact families if children are still on the premises after 6.30PM. Failure in contacting the service will contact emergency numbers on enrolment forms. If no response the service will contact Crisis Care or the local Police department.

ILLNESS

We are sure families would appreciate our concern for protecting the health of all children attending the service. The Director reserves the right to send home or refuse attendance to any child who is considered not well enough to attend, or whose illness may affect the health of other children. For the protection of well children and educators, sick children are asked to be excluded from care until the infectious period is over and the child is well enough to attend.

Our service has a 24hr exclusion period after medication has commenced and have met the minimum exclusion period for their illness. This means children cannot return to the service for 24hrs after they have started antibiotics.

Children who have had immunisations may return to the service the day after their immunisation or injection.

As a protection for all children and educators the service follows strict illness exclusion guidelines. For more information on this please refer to the service Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness policy.

IMMUNISATION

From 22 July 2019, children who are not vaccinated due to family choice can no longer be enrolled in care. You must provide a copy of your child's immunisation history from your mygov account. We cannot begin the enrolment process until this is provided.

The relevant vaccinations are those under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which covers the vaccines usually administered before age 5. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).

ALLERGIES / MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If your child has any allergies or medical conditions, we cannot stress this enough to please make these clear to the Director upon enrolment. The health and safety of all children within the service is of the utmost importance to us. Please include all relevant information on these conditions. By law, our service requires all children with allergies or medical conditions to have a 'Risk Minimisation Plan' and any relevant Action Plan's your child has been given by your Doctor. Please discuss this with the Director.

FOOD AND MEALS

We provide all meals at our service. There are a range of different allergies that enter our service every day. To ensure the health and safety of all children and staff we have a firm no outside food policy. If your child has any allergies / dietary requirements our service will offer alternative meals that suit their needs.

We provide a seasonal menu with a variety of meals that meet the health and nutrition standards for young children. Our cook reflects upon all meals served to ensure children are enjoying what they are eating. These reflections are used to drive the menu and change where necessary.

Meal times are approximately as follows;

Morning tea	9.00 AM
Lunch	11.00 AM
Afternoon tea	2.00 PM

WHAT TO BRING

Each day your child attends our service we ask that you clearly label all your child's belongings and bring along with you;

- Water bottle
- A Sunsmart approved hat
- A few changes of clothes appropriate to the season
- At least 5 nappies for the day (if still required)
- A set of sheets (if your child still sleeps) [cot size]
- Milk bottles (if still required)
- Formula or Breast Milk (if still required)
- Any special creams
- Comforter (this is only recommended for children who sleep during the day)

Remember, children are hard at work here and often the most beneficial experiences come from messy play e.g. sandpits, finger painting, slime etc. Please dress your child in weather appropriate clothing that they can manage easily as we encourage children to try do things themselves.

Please check the lost property box regularly for items belonging you.

Treasures from home – it would be appreciated if children did not bring along toys from home unless required for special days.

COMMUNICATION

It is important to maintain open communication between families, staff and children to ensure the service is meeting all family and children's needs.

We encourage all families to read all notices provided by the service to ensure families are kept up to date on the happenings within the service and Early Childhood sector in general. These notices can be made available through;

- Email
- Storypark
- Flyers
- Newsletters
- Verbal communication

We understand mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child's day. Storypark is a great tool for educators and families to use to communicate with one another on children's days. This can be done through the 'Conversation' element of Storypark.

CCTV

Our Service uses Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), that includes visual and sound elements to monitor the physical environment. It provides protection and security for staff and children in care, assisting in assuring families that their children are in a safe environment and may also assist with misunderstandings, damages to the Service, theft and potentially false accusations by providing digital evidence. Child safety is embedded in our organisation, and we believe the use of CCTV assists in our risk management strategies to prevent, identify and mitigate risks to children.

Camera Locations

- The entrance and exit points
- Foyer Area
- All indoor play spaces (no bathrooms)
- Outdoor play spaces

For more information on the services CCTV policy.

PARENT CONCERNS

Communication is an extremely important part of our service. If you have any concerns, our service has a comprehensive 'Grievance' procedure for families. Please see the 'Grievance Procedure for Families' as well as the 'Family Conduct Guidelines'.

We will endeavour to resolve any queries or concerns you may have and work collaboratively with families for a positive outcome for all.

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